

# Maine Charter School Commission

Key: **Yellow** = Document Information.  
**Red** = Interested Party Questions.

**Wednesday, June 17, 2015**

The RFP Informational Meeting was held in Room 103 B Cross State Office Building, Augusta 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

## **RFP for Public Charter School Applications Informational Meeting Notes**

**Note:** Throughout this document, Commission refers to the Maine Charter School Commission.

1. **Maine Charter School Member Introductions – Shelley Reed, MCSC Chairperson**  
Deanne Lavallee, Administrative Assistant; Laurie Pendleton, Commissioner; Bob Kautz, Executive Director; Gina Post, Director of Program Management; John Bird, Commissioner.
2. Interested Parties Introductions – available upon request.
3. **RFP Review**
  - RFP Information for completing a public charter school application – Shelley Reed. Regular RFP Pages 1-6. Virtual RFP Pages 1-7.

**Intent to Submit a Charter School Application;** in order to apply, this document is mandatory by **June 25, 2015**, submission of the actual completed Application for 2016 is optional.

- The rubrics for the Applications provide a numerical score and a narrative.
- 110 Evaluation Criteria – produces a 600-800 page document. You are creating a district not just a school.

**Executive Summary** – Application Certification must be signed by the Chair of the Governing Board. The Public Charter School Contract is between the Public Charter School Governing Board and the Maine Charter School Commission.

**September 1, 2015, by 5:00 p.m.** Application has to be delivered to the 5<sup>th</sup> Floor of the State Office Building to the Maine Charter School Commission Office.

- Completeness Review – Quantity review not a quality review – do all required criteria appear in the Application? This is done by the MCSC Staff before the Review Team receives the Application.
- If the application is found to be complete, you will receive notification of the date and time of your Review Team Interview (all held in the State Office Building, Augusta).
- If there are deficiencies found in the Application, you will receive notification of same and have five days to provide a complete version of the Application.
- Review Teams consist of a Chair and two other Commission Members.
- Evaluation Criteria is exactly what we are using as a Rubric to measure the contents of the Application. Rubrics are available on the MCSC Website.

**Review of the Applications** is completed by the Review Team, the Commission and any other professional deemed necessary to facilitate a thorough evaluation of the Application. This will include people from the Maine Department of Education, as well as, experts from the public at large.

**September 28 – October 2, 2015** – Governing Board interview with the Review Team to **clarify** any questions the Review Team may have. Notification of date and time will be sent with your completeness letter on or about September 10.

**October 13, 2015** – is when the Commission meets; the Review Team presents their recommendation to the question: *Do we think that this Application has scored high enough to bring it forward to a Public Interview with the Commission and a public hearing for the Community; followed by discussion and a vote of the Commission.*

If your Application is voted to move forward, **October 21 – October 27, 2015** –will be In-person Interviews with the Commission (approx. 90 minutes) and the Public Hearing for the Community to provide testimony to the Commission (approx. 90 minutes). Every effort is made to hold these meetings in the Application Catchment Area. On October 14, you will be notified of the date, time and place.

**November 17, 2015** – is the Commission Final Vote on each Application to begin the Public Charter School Contract negotiations.

**Common Characteristics seen in Successful Charter Schools** See Bullets in Introduction on RFP Page 3.

- We want to see the mission and vision of your school in the education plan, organization of your school, in the fiduciary responsibility, in the governance.
- Clearly define in your catchment area the community need - Who is the student and what is he/she going to get that she/he cannot get any place else? Education program is likely to be effective for this need.
- See continuing Professional education for the staff directly related to the mission/vision of the school.
- Educational Staff have to have a sound knowledge of state educational laws (education, charter, special education, etc.).
- Reach out to the Communities of the catchment area in advance to allay fears and invoke acceptance with your mission and vision so it is wanted and will be sustained and maintained.
- Skill sets needed for the Governing Board – have to have a mix of leaders; vital for the financial planning and management.
- SPED can wipe out your budget. Charter schools are attractive to SPED parents/students and you are going to have to pay attention to the support services you may have to have.

Innovative – Think BIG and have the support systems in place to hold up that dream for you.

### **Information Sheet for Completing a Maine Charter School Application.**

After this meeting, questions by email [mcsc@maine.gov](mailto:mcsc@maine.gov) for Bob Kautz; responses will be posted on the [www.Maine.gov/csc/](http://www.Maine.gov/csc/) as soon as possible.

Applicant instructions go to *Criteria* and Evaluation Criteria mirror the *Criteria* required.

- Read Application Instructions carefully.
- Answer the Question.
- Know the applicable Laws – Most are available on [www.Maine.gov/csc/](http://www.Maine.gov/csc/).
- Use the Department of Education Resources and Maine Association of Charter Schools for needed information.
- Fundraising, in some form, is necessary for sustaining your charter school.

**Monetary Goal** – It is for the applicant to determine the budget based on the implementation of your mission/vision through your educational plan

**Department of Education – Federal SEA Grants?** – This is not clear yet. IF they do, the application process would not be finished until the end of September 2015. This Grant cannot be used as an assumption.

**Fundraising** -Support from your Communities – people who believe in your Mission – this support is better for the Governing Board to control. “*Selling something to someone who can respond.*” Contract is for 5 years – Budget shows the beginning of a trail demonstrating there will be fund-balance reserves – accounts in the black by Year Three. Two budgets: *bare bones* and the *dream budget*.

**What percent is tolerable to come from Fundraising:** We cannot give you a specific answer. It could vary from one proposal to another. The Commission needs to be convinced that you have viability from Day 1 to operate a program that meets your mission and vision.

**There is public information available** on [www.Maine.gov/csc/](http://www.Maine.gov/csc/) from the **Authorized Schools** - applications, budgets, performance reviews, etc.

A significant amount of fundraising is needed to balance your budget each year. The General Purpose Aid is not sufficient. There is no State Funding for Charter Schools for Facilities or Busses.

As stated and a reminder: Your mission and vision need to be woven in throughout all application sections. It may be necessary to be repeating information in order to have woven your mission and vision throughout the Education Plan, Organizational Plan, Governance, Business and Financial, Education Service Providers.

- **Note:** All information from the Applicant is Public Information.
- For a “Brick and Mortar” Charter School, use the Regular RFP and Rubric. Applicant can provide blended learning by using virtual education as an element of your program (a foreign language, advanced courses, etc.), which could mean an Education Service Provider Contract - E. Page 35.

**TABS (Application Page 5):** Form, Template, Insurances, Policies.

Narrative and Tab may be duplicate information – please, exhibit in both places.

**Policies:** School districts are required to have adopted Policies – You may find a school’s policy manual on line – and adapt that for your particular public charter school. The Applicant is responsible for making sure all policies meet the Law.

Model policies are available; you may want to add to them; but be careful about subtracting.

Do not only cut and paste policies – Understand your policies and their implications.

Narrative is a description of the policy – the Policy Tab must be the “Policy to be followed adopted by the public charter school governing board.”

Maine School Management Association (MSMA).

Maine Administrators of Services for Children with Disabilities (MADSEC).

Local School District.

**Daily Schedule:** “One grade from each division.” Division is K-6, Middle School, High School.

**Format Requirements:** Regular RFP Page 6.

**Unbound Copy** with elastic for ease in section copying.

**Thumb Drive – CD:** PDF into one file for loading to [www.Maine.gov/csc/](http://www.Maine.gov/csc/).

**Weak Areas of previous Applications:** Governance; development and clarity of the education plan, budget.

### A. Education Plan - Laurie Pendleton.

Answers 4 questions: What is it you want your students to achieve?  
How do you plan for them to achieve it?  
How are you going to evaluate to know if they have “got it?”  
What are you going to do if they didn’t “get it?”

### **A.1 Mission, Vision Identification of targeted student population and the community the school hopes to serve.**

**Definition of Mission and Vision** - RFP Section II A. Education Plan Page 8.

**Mission** – What is it that you want to do? What is your guiding mission for this particular school? Why do you want to open this school?

**Vision** – What do you see as your school in 5 to 10 years? What is the long-term view of this school? Why are we in this for the long term? What do we expect to have happen?

How your school will differ from the district public school? What different opportunities will be provided? Understanding of the catchment area demographics; know the percent of special education in the area and identify how you will accommodate the needs of your students.

All categories of the Application align to the approach.

Community and targeted population: demonstrate that you are going to be meeting a community or regional need. Interaction with the Community – surveys, meetings, conversations.

### **Students enroll from the targeted catchment area and may enroll from outside of that location.**

05-071 Chapter 140 Section 3. Charter School Operations

#### **2. Enrollment**

- A. **Declaration of student intent.** A charter school shall require a written declaration of intent to enroll in the charter school in the upcoming school year from each student who wishes to enroll in the charter school, including students who have an enrollment preference. The written declaration must be signed by the student’s parent, guardian or legal guardian and submitted to the charter school within the deadline established by the charter school. The charter school must set the deadline so that sufficient time is allowed to conduct a lottery within the time frame set forth in this rule if the number of declarations of intent to enroll exceeds the number of seats available in a grade, level or division of the charter school. The declaration of student intent may request only such information as is needed to determine which grade, level or division of the school the student wishes to enter, **whether the student is eligible for a preference**, and the identity of the student’s resident school administrative unit (SAU).

MRS 20-A Chapter 112 § 2404

H. A public charter school shall give **enrollment preference** to pupils enrolled in the public charter school the previous school year and to siblings of pupils already enrolled in the public charter school. [2011, c. 414, §5 (NEW).]

I. A public charter school may give enrollment preference to children of a public charter school's founders, governing board members and full-time employees, as long as they constitute no more than 10% of the school's total student population. [2011, c. 414, §5 (NEW).]

J. A public charter school may enroll students from outside the State if space is available. [2011, c. 414, §5 (NEW).]

## A.2 Academic Program

Maine Learning Results with Common Core.

What are you teaching and how do you propose to teach it?

Core Subjects: Math, English Language Arts, Science and Social Studies – Sample lesson plans from two different grade levels

Provide research for the learning environment you propose.

Student outcomes.

Professional Development for Teachers.

**Co-Curricular and Extra-Curricular programming: Athletics, Art, Music, Enrichment Opportunities; in and out of school time.**

**What will be offered? How will it be funded? Delivery plans?**

Review Laws in regard to Charter School Student participation in co-curricular activities in their resident districts. Maine Principal's Association can be a resource for this information.

Graduation Standards must include a proficiency-based diploma.

Tracking of students for college, post-secondary opportunities?

Support plan for drop-out students?

## A.3 Special Student Populations

**A special needs student who requires out-of-district placement, the public charter school accepts all responsibility for that student. If enough money is appropriated there are some State Funds for excessive costs over and beyond the State average amount per student to apply for in the spring. The school has to up-front the cost and may have to absorb 4 times the State average. If not enough funds, State reimbursement may be cents on the dollar.**

*The special education allocation will be based on the estimate until the change is made after the October 1 count is complete. So if you have more special education children attending when school starts we will only adjust for those students after we adjust the ED 279, following the October 1 count. It will be a retroactive adjustment, with the additional funds paid through the remaining monthly payments.*

Tyler Backus, School Finance Coordinator, Maine Department of Education

[www.maine.gov/doe](http://www.maine.gov/doe) [207-624-6790](tel:207-624-6790)

**Insurance Policy will cover legal costs, if you have a due process hearing.**

No insurance coverage for service cost for special education students.

Public Charter Schools could pool to have a contingency fund.

Public Charter Schools could share special education professionals.

The authorized Public Charter Schools have formed a group meeting to work out common issues.

*This is a dynamic tension of which you need to plan; but no one's roof has fallen in yet from Special Education.*

**NOTE:** Special Student Populations include: Gifted and Talented Students and English Language Learners.

## **A.4 Assessment**

Assessments provided Data that can be acted on.

High Schools – Students college and career-ready – how will that be assessed?

How will students promote through your school – does not have to be by grade?

How will use your assessment data to make decisions?

## **A.5 School Climate and Discipline**

What is your approach to student discipline and is it likely to promote a safe and supporting learning environment you want to build?

Follow all legal requirements in disciplining students – particularly disciplining students with special needs.

Emergency Procedures – a plan in place for establishing safe procedures for students.

All Policies in place for this section – RFP Page 13.

## **B. Organizational and Operational Plan - Gina Post.**

### **B.1. School Calendar and Daily Schedule**

Non-traditional schedules – explain the rationale and how it equates to the law for number of days per year and number of hours per day.

TABS page 17.

### **B.2. Student Recruitment and Enrollment**

Exhibit Location of catchment area, student demographics, enrollment data from currently operating schools.

How you will reach all community members with information about your school – documentation of this outreach? How and where will you target specific populations who may not have access to this information to provide them an equal opportunity to enroll?

### **B.3. Staffing and Human Resources**

Chief Executive Officer is employed by the Governing Board.

Chief Financial Officer and the Head of School (Principal) are employees of the school.

Public Charter School Administrators are not required to be certified, required to have background check.

Teachers are certified, certified within three years or special area of expertise accompanied by an explanation of their credentials for teaching in your school.

Who are you looking for to teach in your school and justification for your criteria?

Be aware of the requirements for Teacher Performance Evaluation and Performance Growth for all public schools.

Required Tabs listed on Page 20.

**Description for certified teachers – refer to the law for this information.**

### **B.4. Pre-Opening Plan**

An important document in the organization of tasks to open your school; who is responsible, when it needs to be complete/when it is complete.

Tab 19. Pre-opening Plan Template available at [www.Maine.gov/csc/](http://www.Maine.gov/csc/).

### **B.5. Management and Operation**

Tab 20. Organizational Chart – who reports to whom?

**Disclaimer:** 6-17-15 RFP Informational Meeting Notes are only assistance.

Please use the RFP and Rubric for School Opening 2016 - Issue Date 6-10-15 in their entirety to complete your Application.

Tab 21. Administrators and Staff – position descriptions, per the org. chart, illustrating the day-to-day operation for each position – curriculum, personnel, budgeting. Provide any available resumes, background checks, etc. Page 22

Some schools in an attempt to maintain a bare bones budget have created job descriptions that are impossible to carry-out; be realistic.

### **B.6. Parent and Community Involvement**

This is where you want to describe and document contact with people in the catchment area communities (evidence of public meetings), assessing needs, gaining resource partners, growing demand for your school, conversations with the local district schools.

Use these opportunities to demonstrate that you are a public school – not avoiding any element of the population.

How will you continue to foster continuing relationships?

### **C. Governance – John Bird and Bob Kautz.**

- We (Commission) sign a contract with the Governing Board of the School who holds the Charter.
- Head of School takes care of operating the school.
- The Board does not operate the school. Demonstrate that the board is arm's length from the operation of the school.
- Board Recruitment – People who believe in the mission and vision; who understand and have backgrounds in education, business, law, facilities, other board experience, fundraising know-how.
- Conflict of Interest Statements and resumes from each governing board member, which demonstrate their expertise for their board role.
- The Governing Boards responsibilities are application development, knowledge of all application criteria, application commitments, raising money to balance the yearly budget and then oversight of the operation of the school. You let the operators operate and you see if they are doing the job with a formal evaluation process that regularly looks at how things are being done.

Crisis will happen and a Board person(s) may have to jump in to resolve the crisis and jump out as quickly as possible.

The Commission will look to the Governing Board as you have the fiduciary responsibility for the public charter school.

See Tabs on Page 25.

### **D. Business and Financial Services - Bob Kautz.**

- Budget needs to fit the mission and vision.
- Special education needs have to be budgeted.
- Comparable and comparative salaries to the area for staff.

#### **D. 1 Budget**

**Note:** Beginning July 1, 2015, the Department of Education will make direct payments to those public charter schools authorized by the Maine Charter School Commission. Currently, School Finance Staff are creating a template for the applicants to estimate their State Funding. This template will be emailed directly to all parties who have submitted a Letter of Intent; as well as, posted on the website: [www.Maine.gov/csc/](http://www.Maine.gov/csc/).

**Consequently, please disregard the next to last paragraph of RFP on Page 27** *“Note: The Charter School Receives 96% of the per-pupil revenue projections; 1% remains with the resident district; 3% to the Commission from the resident district.”*

**The three percent is the only source of funds for the Commission to provide for the application process and the monitoring responsibilities for each of the authorized public charter schools.**

Tab 29 – All Workbook sections completed – Budgets, Enrollment, Staff, Pre-Opening Cash Flow, and First Year Operating Cash Flow.

## **D.2. Financial Management**

Description of accounting software that connects seamlessly to DOE system, Maine Education Data Management **Financial** System. Contact MEDMS Helpdesk 624-6896 for assistance.

Reporting must be timely and complete in order to receive the funding.

Once you receive the Charter, you are a public body and must abide by all the “right to know” requirements.

**D.3. Facilities** – if you have one, floor plans – how will it be used?

If you do not have one, what are you looking for; options you are entertaining.

List of Tabs are on Page 31.

**D.4. Transportation** – not required to provide for high school students (**Grades 9-12**); elementary (**Grades K-8**) has to be provided.

Your defined catchment area is the section where transportation has to be provided.

**Are we allowed to have drop-off spots for pick-up and drop-off?**

**As with public district schools, collection points are permissible; depending upon the age there are rules regarding distance from home.**

## **D.5. Insurance**

Evidence you have quotes for your insurance needs. Tab. 34.

## **D.6 Food Service**

You are not required to provide food; please give a rationale for not providing food service.

How you will deal with situations of need.

National school lunch program – research the requirements and demonstrate budgeting for it.

**D.7 Closure Protocol** so we know you have thought about the tasks involved and have a process in place.

## **E. Education Service Providers - Shelley Reed.**

An Education Service Provider (ESP) or Charter Management Organization (CMO) or Education Management Organization (EMO) –

- An organization, for profit or not-for-profit, with a contract of \$25,000 or greater to provide a service for your school.

**Community College – You are not entering into a contract with the college.**

**Secondary Education opportunities would be a partnership paying on a per student basis.**

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Please use the RFP and Rubric for School Opening 2016 - Issue Date 6-10-15 in their entirety to complete your Application.

**A. Conclusion – Shelley Reed**

**The RFP is the Rule – in spite of anything we might have said today.**

**The Letter of Intent can be signed by the person authorized by the Governing Board.**

**The Executive Summary must be signed by the Chair of the Governing Board.**

## Information Sheet for completing a Maine Charter School Application.

- \* After this meeting, you can ask questions - limited to the Executive Director by email: [mcsc@Maine.gov](mailto:mcsc@Maine.gov).
- \* Responses to questions will be posted on the MCSC website as soon as possible: <http://www.Maine.gov/CSC>
- \* Applicant instructions are mirrored in the evaluation criteria.
- \* Please read application instructions carefully.
- \* The *Evaluation Criteria* mirror the *Criteria* you are given.
- \* Answer the questions.
- \* It is your responsibility to be knowledgeable and clear on the laws and adhering to them in the application and if approved, in your conduct of operation.
  - Maine Education and School Statutes 20-A Chapter 112 - Creates Public Charter Schools.
  - Department of Education Rule 05-071 Chapter 140 - Describes Public Charter Schools.
  - Maine Charter School Commission Rule Chapter 2 - Procedures for Commission Authorization of Public Charter Schools.
- \* The Funds received from the State of Maine may not be sufficient to operate the school.  
You may have to do Fundraising.
- \* Public Charter Schools do not receive funding for facilities, busses, etc.
- \* Each Section of the Application is important and your Performance Goals should reflect the Mission and Vision for the students in your public charter school.
- \* The application and all materials submitted to the Commission are public documents.

## **RESOURCES**

All items listed below are available on the MCSC Website: [www.Maine.gov/csc](http://www.Maine.gov/csc).

- Maine Revised Statutes Title 20-A Chapter 112 Public Charter Schools
- Maine State Department of Education 05-071 Rule 140, Public Charter Schools
- MCSC Chapter 2 Procedures for Commission Authorization of Public Charter Schools
- Request for Proposal and Charter School Application Maine Charter School Commission
- Reviewer's Evaluation for Public Charter School Application
- Request for Proposal and Virtual Charter School Application for School Opening 2016
- Reviewer's Evaluation for Virtual Public Charter School Application
- Application Cycle Timeline for Fall 2016 School Opening
- Intent to Submit Form
- Executive Summary
- Tab 8. Performance Measures (Indicators)
- Tab 16. Projected Enrollment Table
- Tab 19. Pre-Opening Plan – Required Elements
- Tab 29. Budget Template
- Tab 35. School Closure Plan

Note: Public Charter School Monitoring Plan –  
Provided to Applicants in second phase of application process -  
(Following first Commission vote on Applications – 10/13/15)

# Maine Charter School Commission

Public Charter School Opening Fall 2016.

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Contact

### Phone

### Email

#### Facilities Standards

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Randy Kassa

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#### Federal ESEA / NCLB Programs

#### English Language Learners

Nancy Mullins

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#### Federal Accountability and Title VI - Rural Education Grants

Chelsey A. Fortin

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#### Teacher Effectiveness Grants

Margaret Southworth  
"Meghan"

624-6723

[Margaret.Southworth@maine.gov](mailto:Margaret.Southworth@maine.gov)

#### Title 1 (Disadvantaged Students)

Janette Kirk

624-6707

[Janette.Kirk@maine.gov](mailto:Janette.Kirk@maine.gov)

Jackie Godbout

624-6712

[Jackie.Godbout@maine.gov](mailto:Jackie.Godbout@maine.gov)

#### Infinite Campus - MEDMS

MEDMS Help Desk

624-6896

#### MLTI (Maine Learning Technology Initiative)

Learning through Technology Team

[MLTI.Project@maine.gov](mailto:MLTI.Project@maine.gov)

#### School Funding

Tyler Backus

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#### Special Education

Peg Armstrong

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#### State Assessment System

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#### Maine Association of Charter Schools "MACS"

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Judith Jones